

Statement by the President of the Security Council

The Security Council expresses its concern at the grave security situation in parts of Central Africa within the remit of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), in particular the ongoing crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) and its regional impact, the continuing threat of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the expansion of Boko Haram terrorist activities into countries in the sub-region. The Council also expresses its continuing concern regarding maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, the illegal wildlife trade and transnational organised crime. The Council welcomes the local and parliamentary elections held in the sub-region and stressed the need for upcoming elections in the region to be held in a timely, transparent and inclusive manner according to their constitutions, and encouraged UNOCA to continue to support States in this regard including through the promotion of women's political participation.

The Security Council reiterates its strong condemnation of the appalling attacks, war crimes and crimes against humanity carried out by the LRA and its violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights, including the LRA's recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, killing and maiming, rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence, and abductions. The Council demands an immediate end to all attacks by the LRA and urges the LRA to release all those abducted, and to disarm and demobilise. The Council welcomes the progress made with regard to ending LRA war crimes and crimes against humanity in Central Africa and reiterates its resolve to maintain the current momentum until a permanent end to the threat posed by the LRA has been achieved.

The Security Council pays tribute to the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Central Africa and head of UNOCA, Abdoulaye Bathily, and outgoing African Union (AU) Special Envoy on the LRA Issue Francisco Madeira to strengthen regional cooperation and facilitate continued AU-Regional Task Force (AU-RTF) operations in the region. The Council commends Francisco Madeira for his leadership and welcomes the recent appointment of Lieutenant General Jackson Kiprono Tuwei (Rtd.) as the new AU Special Envoy for the LRA Issue. The Council urges UNOCA, in its coordination role, as well as the United Nations political and peacekeeping missions in the region and other relevant United Nations presences to enhance their efforts in support of the implementation of the United Nations Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the LRA (the UN strategy), as appropriate and within the limits of their mandates and capacities. The Council encourages the Secretary-General to optimise UNOCA's efforts in this regard, including through the use of staff and provision of support to counter-LRA efforts.

The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against the LRA (AU RCI-LRA), and strongly encourages LRA affected and neighbouring states to cooperate with the AU-RTF, in order to end the LRA threat. The Council commends the significant progress made by the AU-RTF and its troop contributing countries, and pays tribute to the important role played by the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces in tackling the LRA threat. The Council urges all

regional governments to fulfil their commitments under the AU RCI-LRA. The Council notes the importance of continued international support for the AU-RTF's operations, logistics, and headquarters. In this regard, the Council welcomes the continued advisory and logistical support provided by the United States as well as funding provided by the European Union. The Council underlines the need for all military action against the LRA to be conducted in compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, as applicable, and to minimise the risk of harm to civilians in all areas of operation and to take into account the association of children with the LRA. The Council also reiterates its encouragement to deploy child protection advisers within the AU-RTF.

The Security Council expresses concern with the statements in the Secretary-General report on UNOCA and the LRA (S/2014/812) that the bulk of the LRA has moved from CAR to the northeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but continues to carry out attacks against communities in the east of CAR. The Council calls upon the affected states to ensure that the LRA does not find safe haven in their territory, in accordance with international law. The Council takes note that the presence of some senior LRA leaders in the disputed Kafia Kingi enclave, on the border between CAR, South Sudan and Sudan continues to be reported. The Council takes note that the Government of Sudan has denied this. The Council welcomes the invitation extended to the AU to verify reports of LRA presence in Kafia Kingi, and encourages the AU Commission and the AU Peace and Security Council to verify the allegations. The Council expresses its continued concern that the gravity of the national crisis in the CAR and strongly condemns the LRA's opportunistic cooperation in CAR with other armed groups including some ex-Séléka combatants.

The Security Council notes the overall decline in the number, intensity and violence of the LRA attacks, killings and abductions and the decrease in United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA's) estimate of the number of people displaced by the LRA threat, from 159,927 in March 2014 to 131,090 in September 2014. The Council commends efforts by international donors to provide humanitarian assistance to LRA-affected populations in the CAR, the DRC and the Republic of South Sudan but notes with concern that renewed efforts are urgently needed to provide humanitarian assistance to LRA affected populations. The Council reaffirms its call for all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access, consistent with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance.

The Security Council welcomes the steps taken to deliver an enhanced, comprehensive, and more regional approach to the humanitarian situation, including assistance to victims of sexual violence and other attacks and urges further progress in this regard.

The Security Council underlines the primary responsibility of States in the LRA-affected region to protect civilians.

The Security Council urges the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the UN Organisation Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), and the UN – AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), as

relevant and in accordance with their mandates, to cooperate and share information related to the regional threat of the LRA in a timely manner, and to share relevant information with regional governments, with non-governmental organizations and relevant partners, to enhance cross-border cooperation in order to better anticipate and respond to LRA movements. The Council emphasises the need for operational coordination and information-sharing between the AU-RTF and all relevant UN and AU missions, in the context of their protection of civilians activities, human rights monitoring, implementation of Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programmes, and counter-LRA operations, as appropriate and in accordance with their mandates.

The Security Council strongly reiterates its calls for the UN, AU and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), to continue to work together, including through joint field assessments, to further develop and maintain a common operating picture of the LRA's current capabilities and areas of operation, as well as to investigate the LRA's logistical networks and possible sources of military support and illicit financing, including alleged involvement in wildlife poaching and related illicit smuggling. The Council expresses its concern at the link between illicit trafficking in wildlife and financing of armed groups in the sub-region, including the LRA, and, in this regard, encourages UNOCA to continue to support the development of a coherent and concerted sub-regional approach to address this disturbing phenomenon.

The Security Council urges MONUSCO and MINUSCA, and other United Nations actors in the LRA-affected region to continue to work with regional forces, national governments, international actors and non-governmental organisations, as appropriate, to develop a common approach to the promotion of defections and support for DDRRR efforts across the LRA-affected area. The Council highlights the importance of programmes in encouraging defections and in support of the release, return and successful reintegration of men, women and children abducted by the LRA, in particular those that target community acceptance of such individuals, in particular children.

The Security Council encourages donors to increase funding for early recovery projects to help affected communities restore stability and rebuild their livelihoods as the LRA threat begins to recede. The Council requests that UNOCA work with the AU, World Bank, the UN Development Program, the UN Children's Fund and other international experts to develop a development framework for international efforts to promote the long-term stabilization of formerly LRA-affected areas in South Sudan, the DRC, and the CAR, including through early recovery projects and programs to strengthen community cohesion.

The Security Council reiterates its call for the swift and full implementation of the conclusions of the working group on children and armed conflict concerning the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the LRA. In this regard, the Council encourages those countries affected by the LRA which have not yet done so to establish Standard Operating Procedures for the reception and handover of LRA children to civilian child protection actors.

The Security Council recalls that the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants for LRA leaders, including Joseph Kony on charges of war crimes and crimes

against humanity, including murder, rape cruel treatment, intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population and forced enlistment of children, have yet to be executed, and calls upon all States to cooperate with relevant national governments and the International Criminal Court, in accordance with their respective obligations, in order to execute those warrants, and to bring to justice those responsible.

The Security Council commends the role of the ECCAS Heads of States in the ECCAS-led international mediation process in CAR and welcomes the designation by the Secretary-General of SRSG Bathily to support the process. The Council commends SRSG Bathily for his diplomatic efforts, in collaboration with the ECCAS mediator, President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo, the African Union Special Envoy for the CAR, Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga, as well as the SRSG for the CAR, Lieutenant General (Retd) Babacar Gaye. In particular, the Council welcomes the signing of the Brazzaville Agreement in July 2014. The Council encourages SRSG Bathily and his Office to continue supporting these efforts and to support MINUSCA, and the Transition process in the CAR through the international mediation process.

The Security Council expresses deep concern at the terrorist attacks conducted by Boko Haram since 2009, which have caused large-scale and devastating loss of life and represent a threat to the stability and peace of West and Central Africa. In particular, the Council strongly condemns the continued increase in attacks perpetrated by the terrorist group in Nigeria, along the Nigeria-Cameroon border, in the northern provinces of Cameroon and attacks near the Nigeria-Chad border. The Council expresses concern that the activities of Boko Haram continue to have adverse humanitarian impact on West and Central Africa including the displacement of an estimated 80,000 Nigerians into neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The Council commends the initiative of the Heads of States of the Lake Chad Basin region and the Republic of Benin to enhance cooperation, in line with the outcomes of the Paris Summit, then follow-up London and Abuja Summits and the meeting in Niamey, in order to tackle the threat posed by Boko Haram to the region. The Council calls on UNOCA to continue its collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), in order to continue to support, as appropriate, the states of the Lake Chad Basin region to address the impact of the threat on peace and security, including the political, socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in the sub-region. The Council underlines the need for all actions to counter Boko Haram to be conducted in compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law.

The Security Council commends UNOCA's support for regional anti-piracy efforts, in cooperation with UNOWA, to address maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea that continues to affect States of Central and West Africa. The Council encourages UNOCA to continue to assist the region in implementing the decisions of the Yaoundé summit, and in the establishment of a regional information-sharing architecture.

The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General keep it informed on the activities of UNOCA, progress made in conducting assessments of the LRA's evolving area of operations and logistical and support networks, and the efforts being undertaken respectively by missions in the region and relevant United Nations agencies to implement the UN's Regional Strategy, including through a single report on the situation in Central Africa and UNOCA's activities to be submitted before 15 May 2015.